

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please delete the Abstract of the Disclosure and substitute the following new abstract:

**ABSTRACT**

A system for inspecting matt, flat and/or slightly curved surfaces in order to identify defects includes an illumination device which irradiates the surface to be inspected at flat angles and has the following features. The illumination device is formed from a plurality of elongated luminous surfaces which are disposed substantially parallel to one another. The light distribution of the respective elongated luminous surfaces is tightly concentrated in planes which lie transversely with respect to the longitudinal direction of the respective surface, in such a way that a substantially sheet-type light distribution is produced which covers the surface portion to be inspected. The observer is located within or at least in the proximity of the angle predetermined by reflection of the light radiated by the at least one elongated luminous surface on the surface portion to be inspected.